

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of using a computer system for on-line  
processing of merchandise returns, comprising the steps  
5 of:

receiving, via the Internet, a return request  
representing a request by a customer to initiate a return  
of at least one item of merchandise; and

processing the return in accordance with one or more  
10 return rules associated with the merchandise.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the receiving  
step is performed via an Internet access tool associated  
with the customer.

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3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing  
step is preceded by the steps of storing the return rules  
in a database and of matching the item to the stored  
rules.

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4. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing  
step is performed by determining if the return is valid.

5. The method of Claim 4, further comprising step  
25 of notifying the customer, via the Internet, whether the  
return is valid.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing  
step is performed by determining disposition of the item.

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7. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by determining a shipping destination of the item.

5        8. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing step is performed by electronically notifying a merchant associated with the return.

9. The method of Claim 1, wherein the processing  
10 step is performed by crediting an account of the customer.

10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of electronically delivering data about the customer  
15 to a merchant associated with the return.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a user interface to the customer, via an Internet access tool, wherein the user interface  
20 displays information associated with return of one or more items purchased by the customer.

12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the user interface displays a list of transactions associated with  
25 the customer, listing items for potential return by the customer.

13. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of downloading a return label to the customer via  
30 the Internet.

14. The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of notifying a shipping agent of the return.

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15. An on-line merchandise return system,  
comprising a computer system programmed to:

receive a return request, via the Internet,  
representing a request by a customer to initiate a return  
5 at least one item of merchandise; and

process the return in accordance with one or more  
return rules associated with the merchandise.

16. The system of Claim 15, wherein the computer  
10 system is further programmed to access stored return  
rules associated with the merchandise and match the item  
to the return rules.

17. A computer product for facilitating online merchandise return services, the computer product having instructions for:

receiving, via the Internet, a return request  
5 representing a request by a customer to initiate a return of at least one item of merchandise; and

processing the return in accordance with one or more return rules associated with the merchandise.

10 18. The computer product of Claim 17, wherein the instructions are further for accessing stored return rules associated with the merchandise and matching the item to the return rules.

19. A method of using a computer for online  
merchandise returns, comprising the steps of:

receiving one or more return rules representing  
merchandise return policies of a merchant; and

5 storing the return rules in a database.

20. An on-line merchandise return system,  
comprising a computer system programmed to:  
receive one or more return rules representing  
merchandise return policies of a merchant; and  
5 store the return rules in a database.

21. A computer product for facilitating online merchandise return services, the computer product having instructions for:

receiving one or more return rules representing  
5 merchandise return policies of a merchant; and  
storing the return rules in a database.



22. A method of using a computer system for on-line  
processing of merchandise returns, comprising the steps  
of:

receiving, via the Internet, a return request  
5 representing a request by a customer to initiate a return  
of at least one item of merchandise; and  
electronically notifying a merchant of the return.

23. The method of Claim 22, further comprising the  
10 step of electronically providing the merchant with  
information about the customer.

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24. An on-line merchandise return system,  
comprising a computer system programmed to:

receive, via the Internet, a return request  
representing a request by a customer to initiate a return  
5 of at least one item of merchandise; and  
electronically notify the merchant of the return.

25. The method of Claim 24, wherein the system is  
further programmed to electronically provide the merchant  
10 with information about the customer.

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26. A computer product for facilitating online merchandise return services, the computer product having instructions for:

receiving return rules representing merchandise  
5 return policies of a merchant; and  
electronically notifying the merchant of the return.

27. The computer product of Claim 26, wherein the instructions are further for electronically providing the  
10 merchant with information about the customer.